



"What Acquiring Minds Want to Know"

LaDOTD Acquirer

10th Anniversary

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R/W workshop is excellent and well received, and other relevant topics

Director's Report BY: Jim Dousay



The 2003 Mid-South States / FHWA Right of Way and Utilities Workshop is now history. And we made some history! The conference was excellent and was well received by the attendees. One hundred forty four delegates from the states of Alabama, Texas, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Louisiana attended panel discussions, ate a lot of great food, and even enjoyed "the flavor of New Orleans." The attendees, besides right of way personnel from the five states, included many of our negotiating consultants, fee appraisers and cost estimators, and District Utility Representatives. They all enjoyed the fine facilities and hospitality of the hotel. These included continental breakfasts and coffee breaks.

The technical sessions were very well done with many interesting topics presented. One of the highlights, to me, was Rudy Aguilar's presentation on appraising outdoor advertising signs. Some of the other outstanding presentations included "The Louisiana TIMED Program" by Jerome Lohmann of LTM; "Subsurface Engineering" (SUE) by the TBE Group of Clearwater, Florida; "Contaminated Properties" by Lawrence Marino of Oats and

Hudson law firm; and "Real Estate Tracking System" by Dave Banghart of Xybernaut Solutions. There were also several group discussion session where participants discussed many other topics, including utility cost estimates, acquisition cost estimates, electronic transmission of appraisals, administrative settlements, appraiser qualifications, and many others.

The Workshop wasn't all serious discussions and presentations, though. On the fun side, Tuesday and Thursday evenings featured 'Icebreakers' at Deanie's Restaurant and Mike Anderson's Seafood, respectively. A cruise on a riverboat was available on Wednesday evening. In addition, Thursday afternoon featured a Mardi Gras Parade! Last, but certainly not least, there was a three way tie in the "Shake Your Booty" contest with all

three being conference participants! They were Consultant Manager Jack Shaffer, Consultant Pete Nyberg, and Consultant Dan Collins. Louisiana leads the way again!

Several people told me this was the best one of these type workshops they had ever attended. One person, who was not employed by a right of way organization, told me he did not realize

the broad range of responsibilities of Real Estate. While some attendees wished that Louisiana would host the workshop every year, the site for next year's meeting has not been determined, yet.

I want to thank Committee Co-Chairs David Pourciau and Mike MacEacharn, Workshop



LaDOTD Acquirer – 10th Anniversary

Coordinator Jennifer Lee, and the rest of the committee for an excellent job in putting on this workshop. Your hard work paid off in a successful meeting, and enforced a positive image for the Real Estate Section. A complete list of committee members is elsewhere in this newsletter.



Work shop participants discuss what they just heard during a break at the Right of Way and Utilities Workshop

LTM

There are other topics of interest as we go into the Holiday Season. LTM is really getting on track with their contract. They are currently working on eight projects, four of which are being negotiated and four of which are being appraised. The Aguilar Group is doing the appraisal reviews. Two companies, Courtney and Associates and W.D. Schock, are doing negotiations. Between them, they currently have about 12 negotiators, but I suspect they will add more in the future.

AARS

The voucher system on AARS is currently being tested, and it should be ready soon. There have been some problems with the main system, but everyone's continued cooperation will help perfect the system. AARS has been attracting a lot of interest around the country (see related article in this issue). This is another area where Louisiana is leading the way.

Personnel

Also, let me congratulate Jack Shaffer and Harvey Blanchard, who were named to the two Consultant Coordinator Manager positions, and to Mike Del Rio, who was named Titles and Acquisition Manager. We have recently hired Steve Davis, a

new Engineering Technician for Utilities. That puts us one short of our number of authorized positions. We are currently in the process of hiring a Real Estate Specialist for the Chase District. Depending on who gets that job, we may be able to hire a Secretary for the Baton Rouge District.

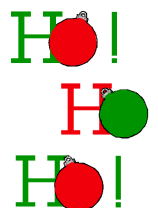
Misc.

I will soon be going to Washington, D.C., for the AASHTO Executive Board meeting. The Right of Way and Utilities subcommittee will be meeting to make plans for the 2004 AASHTO Right of Way conference which will be held in Seattle in May.

I have also been working on developing a new a new policy on underground storage tanks (USTs). The objective is to have the Phase 1 and Phase 2 investigations finished prior to the acquisition stage of a project. We would also like to see remediation completed prior to acquisition. While there will always be situations that come up during negotiations, the goal is to hold these "surprises" to a minimum.

Work is also being done on a database to produce right of way and utility cost estimates. We would use historical data in producing some of the estimates. It is hoped that this system will help generate better cost estimates in the future, especially in the early stages project development.

As you know, we have just completed another election cycle and are anticipating a new administration. While there have been some rumors about who the new DOTD Secretary might be, no one has been named, as of this writing. I feel like we should know within a month who the new Secretary will be. We anticipate working with that person to help move the DOTD program forward.



It's hard to believe, but another year has passed and another Holiday Season is upon us. I want to thank everyone in Real Estate for all your efforts this year. A lot has been accomplished in 2003, and I look forward to a successful 2004. So, I hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year! ♦

“The Louisiana Model”

Other states interested in AARS

Transportation Departments in other states have begun to ask Xybernaut Solutions for demonstrations on the AARS and Programming Project Management System (PPMS), which AARS interfaces with. These states include Maine, Minnesota, Kansas, and California. These states, and others, are becoming interested in what is becoming known as “The Louisiana Model.” Peter LaBerre of Xybernaut Solutions recently participated in a conference call with Caltrans.



Xybernaut sales people have been promoting “The Louisiana Model” as they travel the country. Also, at a recent AASHTO meeting, Project Development Chief Bob Boagni was discussing PPMS with some of his contemporaries, which sparked further interest in both systems.

Unlike some systems, DOTD owns the PPMS and AARS application codes and will have to decide whether or not to share the software with other states. There are few right of way specific computer systems available and decisions will have to be made on how best to show AARS.

“I am very proud that Louisiana is on the cutting edge in our computer technology,” said Acquisition Division Chief Pam Leon. ♦



Dave Banghart of Xybernaut Solutions points out items on a flowchart of Real Estate activities that was used in programming AARS. “The Louisiana Model” has been getting a lot of attention nationally.

A big “Thank You!” to the members of the committee that put on the recent Mid-South States/ FHWA Right of Way and Utilities Workshop.

Jennifer Lee
Workshop Coordinator

David Pourciau
Co-Chair

Mike McEacharn
Co-Chair

Darlene Bourgeois
Denise Elder
Debbie Lane
Christi McEacharn
Donna Stinson
Mona Stuges
Sharon Yates



Congratulations to ...

Harvey Blanchard, who was promoted to Real Estate Consultant Coordination Manager (LTM).

Mike Del Rio, who was promoted to Real Estate Titles and Acquisition Manager.

Jack Shaffer, who was promoted to Real Estate Consultant Coordination Manager (Consultant Coordination).

Monique Carrier, who was promoted to Administrative Secretary.

Ashley Richard, who was promoted to Administrative Secretary.

The 2003 R/W and Utilities Conference in pictures



The registration Desk was the place to be on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning



Delegates get ready for the next technical session



Paul, Don, and Ronnie pose for the camera



Karen Hider, Jim Dousay, and Lester Cisneros of NMDOT enjoy a coffee break



Another technical session is about to begin – this must be New Orleans, they're smiling!



Getting ready for the parade – no, we don't know who's who in this group, either!

10 Ways to Reduce Christmas Stress

from <http://webhome.idirect.com/>

You don't have to be a Scrooge to find Christmas disappointing, or even depressing. Change your expectations and developing some positive new attitudes can help make this the merriest holiday season ever.

- ★ Don't take the responsibility for everyone else's happiness.
- ★ Don't reinforce greedy, whiny behavior by constantly paying attention to it or by getting angry.
- ★ Decide ahead of time that any task you take on is a choice you have made.
- ★ Don't let competition spoil the holidays. The idea behind Christmas is not to give the biggest party, or to have the prettiest tree.
- ★ Do things with your children you both like.
- ★ Don't allow yourself to be lonely, even if you are alone for the holidays. Doing is preventive medicine against depression. Perhaps you can

be of benefit to someone who is worse off than you.

- ★ Forget about the entire holiday season and take it one day at a time.
- ★ Make a list of all the different things that you dislike about the holidays & rid yourself of most of them. Do you hate turkey? Don't serve it. Do you dislike sending greeting cards? Stop it. In other words, if it brings you grief, why are you still doing it?
- ★ Provide time for family members to share the real meaning of the holidays.
- ★ The holidays will not let you down. Only you can do that. The responsibility is always our own. This is a joyous time of the year. Remember the real meaning of happiness, peace, joy, faith, hope and love. ♦



Transportation exhibit slated for the Smithsonian

from www.betterroads.com/articles/

A permanent exhibit focusing on the importance of transportation and its underlying infrastructure will open at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in 2003. The \$2-million educational exhibit will be sponsored by The American Road and Transportation Builders Association and the National Asphalt Pavement Association. "The transportation construction market depends on continued public support for increased infrastructure investments,"

ARTBA President and CEO Pete Ruane said. "This exhibition and the collateral Internet Web site, books, television programs, and other planned activities will reach millions of Americans." Ruane said the high-profile exhibition, to be called *America on the Move*, will go a long way to raising public awareness about the need for

increasing investment, efficiency, and safety in our national transportation network. "The project represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to educate the public about highways," said NAPA Chairman of the Board R. Wayne Evans.



The exhibit will reach about six million visitors each year. The 26,000-square foot exhibition will be the foundation of the most important public education program undertaken on transportation in the United States. It will focus on the impacts of infrastructure built since 1876. Using state-of-the-art media and interactive

techniques, the exhibit will tell the story of transportation history through period settings using artifacts from the Smithsonian collections. The Interstate Highway System will be a major part of the exhibit. ♦

Welcome to . . .

Steve Davis

Engineering Technician DCL
Gang 042

Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial

Major Remaining Events

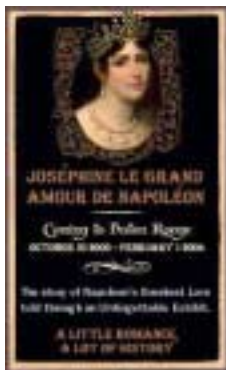
The celebration of the Bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase is winding down. Below are a few of the remaining events, found in a search of the internet.

State Museum in Shreveport

The Louisiana State Exhibit Museum will celebrate the Bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase with an exhibition, **The Louisiana Purchase: Thomas Jefferson and Napoleon**, opening on Sunday, August 3, 2003, at noon. This historic exhibition will remain on view until December 31st.

The exhibition includes the first Smithsonian Institution artifacts ever shown in the area, including documents from the National Postal Museum along with drawings and paintings from the National Portrait Gallery. The Marriage Certificate of Napoleon and Josephine is provided by The Forbes Collection. The Library of Congress has loaned 12 documents never before displayed to the public. Other objects related to the period from private collections will be on display, including a lock of Napoleon's hair and flint lock guns.

Louisiana Arts and Sciences Museum in Baton Rouge



This exhibition illustrates the life of Marie-Joseph-Rose Tascher de la Pagerie, born in Martinique in 1763. Through her cleverness, charm and generosity, she survived the chaotic years preceding and during the French Revolution to become empress of France as the wife and true love of

Napoléon Bonaparte, who called her Joséphine.

Joséphine's history is told in three parts: before, during, and after her years with Napoléon.

Approximately 40 artifacts constitute the first part of the exhibition, which begins with Joséphine's early life on the Caribbean island of Martinique. From Martinique she was sent as a teenager to Paris and into her troubled first marriage to the French aristocrat Alexandre de Beauharnais. The father of her two children, Beauharnais was beheaded in 1794 during the Reign of Terror. Joséphine gradually entered Parisian salon society and became friendly with the powerful men and beautiful women who were associated with the Directoire government and who introduced her to the young military officer Bonaparte. This part of the exhibition culminates with Joséphine's marriage to Napoléon.



In the second, most important part of the exhibition, 100 objects document Joséphine's life with Napoléon.

The final section of the exhibition traces Joséphine's life from the imperial divorce in 1809 to her death in 1814. Napoléon divorced Joséphine because she was unable to produce an heir.

A final component of the exhibition concerns Joséphine's impressive legacy. Napoléon adopted her two children Eugène and Hortense, and Hortense married Napoléon's younger brother, Louis. The final object in the exhibition is the crib called the "cradle of Europe," which belonged to Eugène's daughter. Through her, many of the monarchs reigning in Europe today are descended from Joséphine.

The Cabildo in New Orleans

Historic Louisiana Purchase documents will go on display Monday (December 1, 2003) at the Cabildo building on Jackson Square in New Orleans. The documents marked the official transfer of the Louisiana Territory from Spain to France and from France to the United States. The

papers were signed in 1803 in the Cabildo on November 30th and December 20th respectively

They will be on display at the Cabildo until December 20th as part of the Louisiana State Museum's Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial exhibit (*ed note*: they had previously been displayed at the Old State Capitol in Baton Rouge). ♦

Have trouble keeping New Year's resolutions?

from www.celebratelove.com/resolutions.htm

Here are a few ideas to consider when making resolutions:

- 1. Set realistic resolutions.** It is not wise to resolve to run a marathon if you've never jogged around the block.
- 2. Take a stand for your resolutions.** Endorse resolutions you know you can get excited about; make them your own. Never make a resolution because you think someone else wants you to.
- 3. Take baby steps.** Incremental goals work best. Instead of resolving to shed 60 pounds, go for 10. When you reach that goal, set another.
- 4. Make a written plan.** Be specific as to what you want, then set a deadline. When you reach your goal, reward yourself.
- 5. Develop a support network.** Tell a trusted friend what your intentions are; someone who will encourage you to continue and complete your goal.
- 6. Reward yourself.** A periodic pat on the back (when you deserve it) as you accomplish your resolves will keep you motivated.
- 7. Think: Long term.** Everyone slips up once-in-awhile. Resolutions are goals, not rigid absolutes. If you slip, don't call it off, recommit. Dust yourself off and get going again. ♦



What'll they think of next? - Robotic Barrels!

from www.betterroads.com/articles/

New research is underway to develop a robotic highway safety barrel that can self-deploy and self-retrieve, removing workers from in-traffic danger.



Barrel positions could be quickly reconfigured by remote controls as the work zone changes. The barrels could continuously follow crews to maintain proper safety limits.

The first stage of the project will focus on a low-cost and reliable robot design. Then, a six-robot system will be designed. In the third stage, the Nebraska Department of Roads will be involved in field tests. ♦

Christmas 2003



Juliana shows some of the Christmas decorations around her desk in the reception area of the Acquisition Division



Merry
Christmas
from the *Acquirer*



(l-r) Jamie, Jerry, Richard, Mark

Sports Report

Team members Jamie (Deadeye) Boullion, Jerry (Long Knocker) Braswell, Richard (Lefty) McElveen, and Mark (Big Head) Gillespie won the annual 2003 Ed Wedge Invitational Golf Scramble on October 3. These players represented Real Estate shooting a winning score of 9 under. Each player was complimentary toward their fellow team members responding to the pressure of play. Their prize is the engraved Scramble Trophy on displayed in the Real Estate office. They will keep the trophy for a year and defend their title in 2004

State Road Conditions Improve

www.betterroads.com/articles/

A new report by Professor David T. Hartgen of the University of North Carolina says that even with better conditions, about \$35 billion would need to be found over six years to bring all states up to the current U.S. average.

The 12th annual report found that state highway systems have improved with the percent of poor-condition rural interstate roads dropping from 3.9 to 1.9%. Poor condition urban interstate dropped from 8.8 to 5.5%. The percent of deficient bridges declined from 30.4 to 26.8%. Urban interstate congestion worsened from 44.1% to 50.9% congested, however.

Not all states have equal conditions. According to the study, the percent of poor-condition rural interstate roads varied from zero in 24 states to 24% in Arkansas. The percent of poor-condition urban interstate varies from zero in nine states to 28% in Hawaii. The percent of poor-condition major rural roads varied from zero in seven states to 3.5% in South Dakota. The percentage of congested urban interstates varied from zero in three states to 82% in California. The percent of deficient bridges ranged from 5% in Arizona to 54% in Rhode Island. The percent of narrow lanes on major rural roads varied from zero in four states to 44% in West Virginia.

Generally, rural states had better road conditions, less congestion, and lower repair costs compared with urban states. But the rural states also tended

to have the highest fatality rates, varying by almost a factor of three. The lowest rate is in Massachusetts and the highest rate is in Louisiana. The top 10 states, rated by cost-effectiveness of their state highway systems are North Dakota, Wyoming, South Carolina, Georgia, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Montana, Kentucky, and Alabama. The bottom states rated by cost-effectiveness are California, New York, Michigan, Arkansas, Hawaii, Massachusetts, and New Jersey.

The study is based on data submitted annually to the federal government by the 50 states, Hartgen says. ♦

Big Brother on the Dashboard

www.betterroads.com/articles/

Next year, you can keep track of your driving by using a device from DriveDiagnostics that provides direct feedback. The device sits on the dashboard and monitors every move the vehicle makes using accelerometers to measure forces on the car.

Software in the device evaluates all of the events in a specific trip and, if it determines driving patterns are poor, notifies the driver with a warning sign and one of 30 profiles.

The device flashes a red light when a bad move is made.

Targeted drivers include beginners, car fleet drivers, and drivers required to use the device by an insurance company to provide data about driver performance. ♦

Swimming swans costlier; milkmaids still cheap

from <http://moneycentral.msn.com/content/CNBCTV/Articles/>

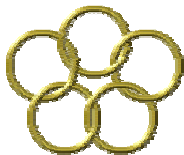
The apparently volatile market for swans and calling birds from the famous "12 Days of Christmas" song has pushed the price of a traditional lords-a-leaping, drummers-drumming Christmas up 16% over last year. While pear trees and golden rings saw a drop in price from last year and partridges held steady, big jumps came in prices of swans, pipers and drummers.



Partridges stayed the same, but pear trees dipped significantly

In its annual tongue-in-cheek economic analysis, PNC

Advisors said the price of the gifts in the song rose 16% from the year-ago period, the largest rise since the index began in 1984. As an inflationary gauge the index may be little tenuous, considering the arcane nature of some of the gifts. But the numbers do reflect the broader productivity trend of the U.S. economy, with the price of services rising modestly and that of goods rising, said Jeff Kleintop, chief investment strategist at PNC



Gold rings actually went down slightly

For 2003, the price of 12 drummers rose 22.8%, while the price of 11 pipers also jumped 22.8%. Leaping lords, in this case the Philadelphia Ballet, held steady, and the price of ladies dancing -- gleaned from the price charged by a modern dance troupe -- edged up 3%. But one service that hasn't



Most of the birds stayed the same, but swans jumped by more than 66%

seen rising prices in a while is maids-a-milking, which reflects the trend of outsourcing unskilled labor from the United States to other countries.. The price of

eight-maids-a-milking held steady this year. The price of festive swans swimming in your pond this year saw the biggest gain, rising 66.7%.

If your true love were to buy all the items on the list, it would cost him or her \$16,885.28. Using the Internet would cost significantly more, \$25,109.27, mainly because of the cost of shipping. And if your true love is really traditional and gives all the items in the carol, including the repetitions, he or she is looking at a bill of \$65,264.28. The True Cost of Christmas index, as PNC calls it, is up 18.8% from 2002. "That's roughly the price of a new luxury SUV, which I'd rather have this holiday season" Kleintop said. ♦

Percentage change - 2002 to 2003

One partridge in a pear tree: -24.4%

Partridge: no change

Pear tree: -28.6%

Two turtle doves: no change

Three French hens: no change

Four Calling birds: +26.6%

Five gold rings: -5.6%

Six geese a-laying: no change

Seven swans a-swimming: +66.7%

Eight maids a-milking: -0.1%

Nine ladies dancing: +3%

Ten lords a-leaping: no change

Eleven pipers piping: +22.8%

Twelve drummers drumming: +22.8%

“Quotable”

“The road to success is always under construction.” – **Unknown**

“When you make a mistake, admit it, correct it, and learn from it--immediately.” – **Stephen Covey**

“Life is a great big canvas; throw all the paint on it you can.” – **Danny Kaye**

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.” – **T. S. Eliot**

“Our brightest blazes are commonly kindled by unexpected sparks.” – **Samuel Johnson**

“There is no need to boast of your accomplishments and what you can do. A great man is known; he needs no introduction.” – **Unknown**

“Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.” – **John Wooden**

“What the world really needs is more love and less paperwork.” – **Pearl Bailey**

“Excuses are bridges to nowhere. People who use excuses are monuments to nothing.” – **Unknown**

“Someone's sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago..” – **Warren Buffet**

“Politics is not a bad profession. If you succeed there are many rewards, if you disgrace yourself you can always write a book.” - **Ronald Reagan**

“Yesterday's endings are seeds for today's beginnings.” – **Lewis Losoncy**

“It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare, it is because we do not dare that they are difficult.” – **Seneca**

“You can lead a man to Congress, but you can't make him think.” - **Milton Berle**

“We all have ability. The difference is how we use it.” – **Stevie Wonder**